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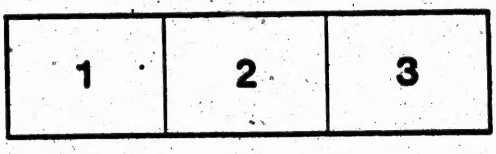

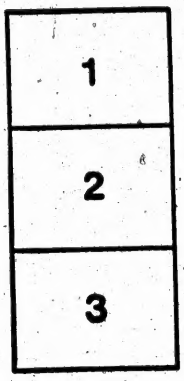

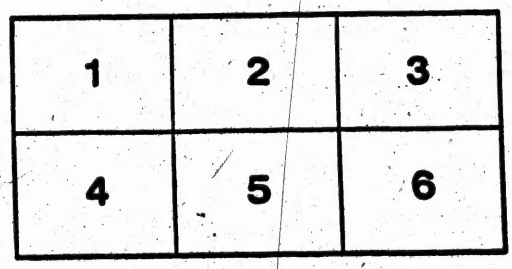

Leaflet Series No. 11

Supplied in Quantities at 1c. each

What the Bible Says About Baptism

By REV. W. A. MACKAY, B.A., D.D., Woodstock, Ont.

Recommended by a Committee of the Presbyterian Ministerial Association of Toronto.

Does the Word Baptize Mean to Dip?

With great confidence Baptists assure us that the word baptize means to dip, and never means anything else. "Nothing but dipping is baptizing," they say, and they hesitate not to debar from the Lord's Table all unbapped persons as unbaptized, and consequently unworthy communicants. Now this is a very high position to take, and those who take it ought to be very sure of the soundness of their contention. The reader will carefully observe that the Baptist doctrine is not that *baptizo* sometimes means dip, or immerse in the sense of dip, but that it never means anything else. If then we are able to point out one, even one instance, in which the word does not mean dip, the whole exclusive Baptist theory perishes; for we have thus proved that there may be a baptism without a dipping. A careful examination will, however, show the candid and intelligent reader, that not one instance merely, but all the instances, without one exception, are irreconcilably opposed to the dipping theory.

Neither in the Scriptures nor in Greek literature, sacred or secular, prior to the time of Christ, does the word *baptizo* have such a meaning as "dip," or "immerse" in the sense of "dip." In every one of these ancient baptisms we find the

baptizing element or instrumentality moved and brought upon the person or thing baptized; never once do we find the person or thing baptized moved, and put into and under water or any other element, and then immediately withdrawn, after the manner of the Baptists. We do not, however, argue that *baptizo* indicates specific mode of action, sprinkling or pouring, any more than dipping. It indicates effect or condition, irrespective of the mode of action by which that effect or condition has been brought about. So with many other words. A hurt B. But the question is always in place, How? for the word "hurt" does not indicate mode. So also, A anointed B. We may ask, How did he anoint him? for the word anoint does not indicate the mode. And even the Baptist must answer that the anointing was by pouring. But still to anoint does not mean "to pour." So also A baptized B. The question may be asked, How did he baptize him? for the word baptize does not indicate specific mode any more than the words "hurt," "anoint," etc. The word *baptizo* indicates effect, state, or condition, but has nothing to do with the mode by which that effect, state or condition has been brought about. Dr. Charles Hodge, probably the greatest theologian this continent has ever produced, says, "The fact is *baptizein* does not express any particular mode of action. As to dye expresses any kind of action by which an object is colored; to bury, any kind of action by which an object is hidden and protected; so to baptize expresses any act by which a person or thing is brought into a state of being wet, purified, or even stupefied, as by opium or wine." ("Systematic Theology," Vol. III., p. 533.) Dr. J. W. Dale, who has gone over the whole baptistic question with a thoroughness never before attempted, and who has given us the result of his investigations in four large volumes, says, "A blind man could more readily select any demanded color from the spectrum, or a child could more readily thread the Cretan labyrinth, than could the seven wise men of Greece declare the nature or mode of any given baptism by the naked help of *baptizo* ("Classic Baptism," p. 353). The learned Robert Young, LL.D., author of the great "Greek and Hebrew Analytical Concordance" to the Bible, says, "From all this I gather that the word *baptizo* has no real specific reference to mode at all, but to the object, effect or result contemplated." See his tract, "Baptism *versus* Immersion."

The specific mode in which the state or condition expressed by *baptizo* is effected must be determined, not from the word itself, but from the context; and the examination must include

a careful inspection of every instance. This, the writer claims to have done. In a pamphlet of sixty pages, entitled, "Baptism: Its mode and meaning at the time of our Lord," I have given, in the original Greek or Hebrew, every instance of the word occuring up to the time of Christ. These are the only instances that could have any influence on the minds of the New Testament writers. The instances are twenty-seven in number. They are carefully arranged in chronological order, a literal translation given, and this question asked in each case, "What was moved in this baptism, the baptizing element or the subject baptized?" In every case the answer is adverse to the dipping theory. The baptizing element is always moved, the subject baptized is never moved. In no instance is there a dip; that is, the person or thing baptized moved, put into the baptizing element, and then withdrawn, after the manner of the Baptists.

In the pure classics, the youth in a condition of mental perplexity is a baptized youth; the man in a condition of drunkenness is a baptized man; the coast in a condition of being overflowed is a baptized coast. There was a different state or condition each time, but all were classic Greek baptisms. And as to the mode, there was no dip in effecting these baptisms. In the one case the baptizing instrumentality was the questions; in the other the wine, and in the last the waves. But the youth was not put into the questions, the questions were put to him; the man was not plunged into the wine, the wine was put into him; the coast was not taken up and dipped into the sea, the sea came upon the coast. And so in all the remaining cases of the twenty-seven, there is not a "dip" in one of them. There is always a state or condition expressed, and the context usually determines that state or condition as brought about by the baptizing element or instrumentality being moved and brought upon the person or thing baptized. Never once is the person or thing baptized spoken of as moved and put into the baptizing element. So much for the classics. In Leaflet No. 12, we shall show that the same is the case in the New Testament.

This Leaflet is one of a Series of Twenty-four on Baptism, supplied in quantities, post free, at One Cent Each.

A Series of 4-page LEAFLETS ON BAPTISM, by the REV. W. A. MACKAY, B.A., D.D., Woodstock, Ont.

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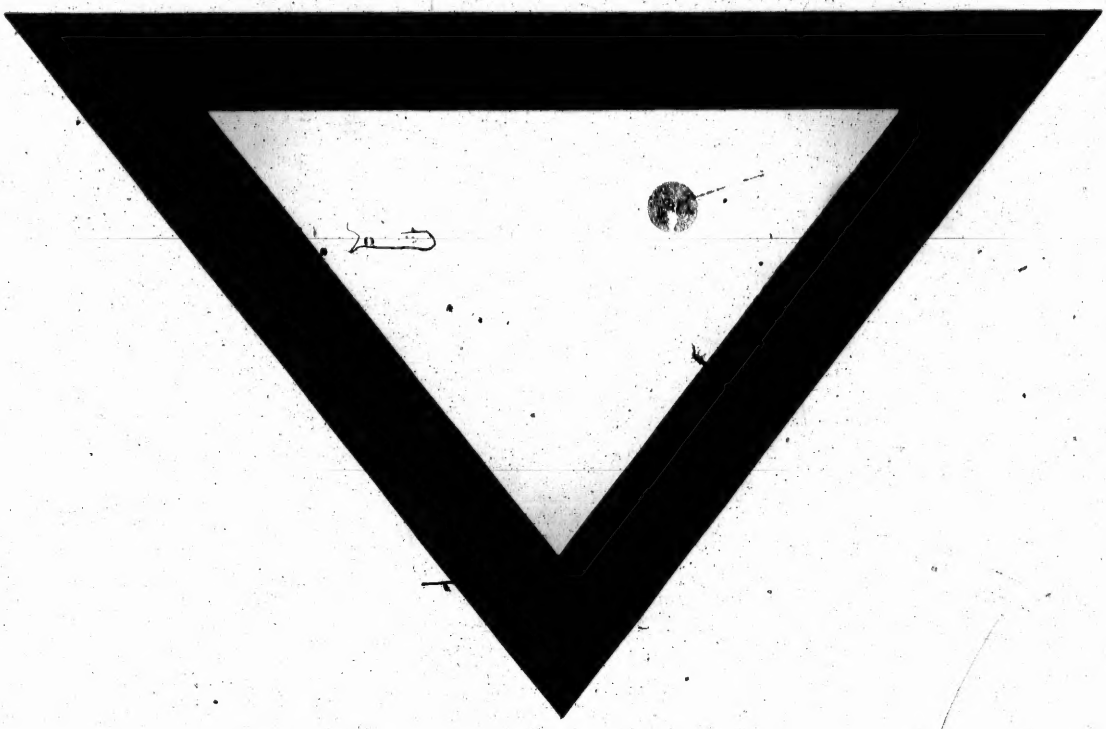
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12. Does the word Baptize mean to Dip? (Continued.)
13. The Origin of Immersion for Baptism.
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